American Support to Pakistan

2531. SHRI DATTAMEGHE: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether President George W. Bush has signed into law a bill that binds the United States to a long term commitment to support Pakistan;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) Government's reaction thereto?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRI RAO INDERJIT SINGH): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. President Bush signed the "Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Preventbn Act of 2004" on December 17,2004. Section 7103 of the Act provides the legislative basis for a long-term U.S. policy to Pakistan. It conveys U.S. concerns in regard to that country, reflects U.S. assessments about certain critical issues, and spells out U.S. objectives *vis-a-vis* Pakistan and the larger region. Section 7103 of the Act contemplates:

* A deeper and longer-term commitment by the United States to Pakistan, including maintenance of present levels of aid.

* A two-year waiver to Pakistan from various legislative provisions restricting aid, covering FY 2005 and FY 2006.

* An internal reform thrust in Pakistan, focusing on its educational system and governance process, particularly in regard to tribal areas.

* Addressing Pakistani concerns, including outstanding difficulties with its neighbours and other countries in the region.

(c) Government of India understands U.S. efforts in addressing the socio-economic, proliferation and terrorism-linked concerns emanating from Pakistan. Government's strong concerns on U.S. military assistance to Pakistan, however, have been conveyed to the U.S. Government.